SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM: The hon. Member have given good suggestions, so far as the illiterate people, those who are using tobacco or *khaini,* are concerned. Therefore, his suggestion would be considered when a comprehensive legislation is brought forward. Valuable views and suggestions of other Members also will be considered in the new legislation. I, therefore, request the hon. Member to withdraw his Bill.

SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Sir, I would like to withdraw the Bill.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Does the hon. Member have the permission of the House to withdraw his Bill?

The Bill was, by leave, withdrawn.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Dr. Mohan Babu - Absent. Shri E. Balanandan - Absent. Shri S. Ramachandra Reddy.

THE HANDLOOM WEAVERS (VIABLE WORKING CONDITIONS AND OTHER WELFARE MEASURES) BILL, 1998

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): I move:

> "That the Bill to provide for the viable working conditions for the handloom weavers by assuring subsidized regular supply of yarn and other raw materials, interest free consumption loans, insurance for the handlooms and the weavers, loans at nominal rates for purchasing yarn and other raw material from the Banks and other financial institutions, making it mandatory for the Governments and their departments to purchase its cloth requirements from primary handloom weavers and their co-operatives, and for certain other welfare measures to be undertaken by Central and State Governments and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto be taken into consideration."

SHRI JIBON ROY(West Bengal): Sir, it is an important Bill concerning the whole Nation . *(Interruptions)*.. The Minister concerned must be here to hear him...*(Interruptions)*...

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): Sir, I will take down notes.

SHRI JIBON ROY: No. The Minister for Textiles should be here...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: The Chair has permitted me to take down notes...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Sir, this is the problem concerning millions and millions of people living in the country.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO (Goa): Sir, I am absolutely with him. This Private Members' Business is completely devalued. Parliament is no more Parliament. This is just a forum for the Government and the political parties to transact their, I would almost say, "deals." You see, this is the Private Members' Business. Sir, this is a device by which hon. Members move legislations here to express their views on behalf of the people and we have half-an-hour or one hour or two hours per week. Even the slightest respect is not given to that. Then, what is the point of having the Parliament, if a Member of Parliament cannot express himself with any degree of seriousness?...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Sir, I also wish the Minister concerned was here...*(Interruptions)*...Otherwise, what is the use?...*(Interruptions)*...There is no point...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री जीवन राय: आज तक क्या फायदा मिला है आपको मिनिस्टर के रहने से ।

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I want to say something apart from what he is saying...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: Sir, he asked me to note down the points...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY: No...*(Interruptions)*...Members will move Private Members Bills and afterwards they have to withdraw them. The concerned Minister is not there even to hear the deliberations...*(Interruptions)*...It is useless...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: Sir, he has sent me a message that he was held up in a traffic jam. Therefore, I will take down notes...*(Interruptions)*...Then, the Minister will reply...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY: No...*(Interruptions)*...The Minister should be here...*(Interruptions)*...It is not Government Business...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Hon. Members, I have to take the sense of the House...*(Interruptions)*...What the Minister Shri O. Rajgopal - is saying is that he will is note down the points and send the same to the Minister...*(Interruptions)*...गौतम जी, आप रुकिए, उनको बोलने दीजिए ।

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम : उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, आपने उनको बोलने की अनुमति दी है इसलिए मुझे भी बोलने की अनुमति दीजिए । Please allow me to say something...*(Interruptions)*...

4.00 PM

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: It is a great injustice to Parliament...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): I have to take the sense of the House, since the Minister concerned is not present...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY (Tamil Nadu): The Minister concerned must be there...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM (Tamil Nadu): Sir, the Minister must be there...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Sir, if you feel, in the interest of the Business, it must be allowed, you may allow it, but an observation is called for from the Chair that, in future, such a thing should not happen. There should be an observation from the Chair...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY: Sir, I do not withdraw my objection. Let the Minister concerned be there...*(Interruptions)*...

4.00 P.M.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Please, take your seat ...*(Interruptions)*... Please take your seat...*(Interruptions)*...गौतम जी, आप क्या कह रहे हैं ।

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम : मैं कह रहा हूं कि नॉर्मली, आम तौर से, आज भी यहां दो विधेयक थे और एक विधेयक बहस के लिए था । आम तौर पर मैंने यह देखा है कि एक या दो बिल ही होते हैं किंतु यह एलीगेशन लगाना कि...**(व्यवधान)**...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Please wait ...*(Interruptions)*... नो, नो गौतम जी, अभी रामचंद्रा जी जो बिल ले रहे हैं , क्या यहां मिनिस्टर हैं, मंत्री जी तो चले गए हैं ...?

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम : मैं आपसे यह नहीं कह रहा...**(व्यवधान)**... यह दूसरी बात है...**(व्यवधान)**... मैंने यह रिक्वेस्ट की है आपसे...**(व्यवधान)**...That the concerned Minister is not present, is wrong...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री जीवन राय : आप भी नहीं जानते, क्या बात है...**(व्यवधान)**... हम तो राणा जी को मिनिस्टर जानते हैं । We want the Minister concerned to know what the problem is.

SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM: Sir, the Minister of State for Textiles is here...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM: Sir, the Minister of State for Textiles is here...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM: He is very much here...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY: I am sorry. I do not know that he is there...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Shri Ramachandra Reddy, please move the Bill.

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Sir, I have already moved the Bill. My appeal to you is that the Cabinet Minister, Shri Kashiram

Rana, who is an experienced Minister should have been here. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI JIBON ROY: No Cabinet Minister is here ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Sir, I would request you to please permit me to speak in Telugu.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): But, will you give it in writing?

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Yes, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Then, it is okay. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI JIBON ROY: This is a disrespect to a major party, which is supporting the Government from outside...*(Interruptions)*... The concerned Minister is absent.

*SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Mr. Vice-Chairman Sir, according to the information given by the Government on several occasions there are seventy lakh people depending on the handloom industry. But Sir, I can say with all the authority at my command that in our country there are more than one crore people depending on the handloom industry. Especially in states like Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh there are a large number of families depending on this industry. It is a very ancient industry which almost started side by side with agriculture in our country. It is said that after food, cloth is the most essential item for a human being. When that much is the importance and significance of cloth, we have to give top priority to this industry. Our brothers who are working in this industry living in villages are able to provide the required cloth to all of us and it is the most essential items. If this industry did not exist we would roam around naked like animals.

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* English Translation of the Original Speech delivered in Telugu.

Sir, the handloom industry is known for its fine products not only in our country but in the whole world as well. This industry gained this importance especially in the State of Andhra, for producing a saree which could fit in a matchbox. But Sir, unfortunately the state of this industry today is abysmal. People engaged in this industry are unable to make ends meet. There are people who weave the cloth. Besides, there are also lakhs of people working in ancilliary processes like dying, bleaching, printing, embroidery etc. They entirely depend on this industry to earn their livelihood.

Sir, people engaged in the ancilliary industry are also facing difficult situations. They are able to supply cloth to others to their requirements but are unable to meet their own minimum needs of clothing.

Sir, this is really a very sad state of affairs in our country. All of us know that once upon a time this industry was known for its eminent position but now the handloom weavers have to struggle hard to get handful of grains.

Sir, the handloom weavers require yarn. This yarn is not available to them at affordable rates. Though the Government started different programmes and made several promises, the situation of these poor weavers living in remote villages remains as pitiable as before and they are still not able to get yarn at a reasonable price. The banks are not coming to their rescue. If they are provided loans at nominal interest rates the weavers would be able to buy the required yarn and the banks can also recover the loan on time. Since the banks are unable to help them they depend on the money lenders who are exploiting their situation.

Sir, next is the introduction of powerlooms. Of course we are not against powerlooms. But it should be the responsibility of the Government to protect the handloom sector also. Sir, I doubt if the Government is really discharging its responsibility. The handloom industry is also facing lot of problems as it has to compete with the powerloom sector. Sir, I want to remind this August House the incident which occurred two or three years back in my State of Andhra. Handloom weavers could not buy yarn as it was not available at affordable rates nor could they sell their products. Unable to face the circumstances around 200 weavers committed suicide. Sir, they embraced death because they did not have any alternative source

of livelihood and were unable to fight against their fate. The State Government started many programmes to help them come out of their miserable situation. But Sir, State Governments have limited resources at their disposal and whatever help they can extend is not enough. These workers committed suicide not only in Andhra but Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh as well. The efforts made by the State Governments prove insufficient because of the constraint of resources with them. So, it is time the Centre extended a helping hand to the States to improve the condition of the handloom weavers. Lately, Government decided to buy the products from them and supply to all the Government employees. This scheme was implemented for some time but later it was dropped. Sir, my request to the Government is that it has to take steps to improve their condition and protect them from the situation forcing them to commit suicide.

Firstly, they should be given financial assistance. Secondly, banks should be instructed to give loans to the handloom weavers at lower rate of interest. Sir, Co-operative Societies were formed at many places but are unable to function effectively in the existing circumstances. Co-operative Societies are unable to pay back their loans. So, the Government has to take some immediate steps.

Sir, Parliament passed a Bill on this subject to improve the situation. The Handlooms (Reservation of articles for production) Act 1985 came into being. But we do not know what happened to that Bill. Handloom weavers were hardly benefited. Sir, my purpose of introducing this Bill is to request the Government to improve the situation of these Handloom weavers by providing them loans, yarn and also to create a 'Handloom Weavers Welfare Fund'. The Centre and State Governments together should create a permanent Welfare fund for the Handloom weavers so that it could be utilized for their welfare and development.

This welfare fund should be managed by a board of members consisting of a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a few other representative members. These members can be appointed in consultation with the Chief Ministers of States especially those where the Handloom weavers are

concentrated. This board could consider giving interest free consumption loans to these weavers if necessary. Further, in case of sudden death of an earning member, the Government should come forward and assist the kith and kin of such weavers. Apart from arranging loans at nominal rates for purchase of raw material the Government should arrange for necessary marketing facilities for their products. They should also be provided with education and housing facilities. Though presently the Government has undertaken schemes to provide housing facilities it doesn't cater to even five per cent of their requirement.

So, the projects for construction of houses for weavers should be taken up on a large scale. The Government can also start a scheme to buy their products to be supplied to the Government employees to help them further. Sir, handloom products are also exported to various countries. We are earning crores of rupees as foreign exchange through the export of these products. If we promote this industry we will be able to earn more foreign exchange.

Sir, it is therefore, essential to constitute a board which will attend to every need of the Handloom weavers. The Government should immediately create the welfare fund and take steps to improve the situation of handloom industry. My humble submission to the hon'ble Minister and the Government is to approve this bill and implement to improve the pitiable living condition of these Handloom weavers. I thank you Sir, for giving me this opportunity.

The question was proposed.

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम : उपसभाध्यक्षजी, कपड़ा हमारे देश का प्राचीनतम उद्योग रहा है और भारतवर्ष पिछले हजारों वर्षों से कपड़े का व्यापारी रहा है। कपड़ा कई तरह से बनता है। यह जो हथकरघा है -बुनकरों का पेशा- यह लघु उद्योग और कुटीर उद्योग की श्रेणी में आता है। हम देख रहे हैं कि हमारे देश के जो बड़े उद्योग थे, वे धीरे-धीरे विदेशी कंपनियों के हाथों में चले जा रहे हैं और आज मंझले उद्योग भी बड़े उद्योगों की चपेट में आ रहे हैं । दूसरी ओर आधुनिकीकरण और कंप्यूटर युग के कारण इन बड़े और मंझले उद्योगों में लोगों को रोजगार भी नहीं मिल पा रहा है जिस कारण बेरोजगारों की संख्या बढ़ती चली जा रही है । सिर्फ एक लघु और कुटीर उद्योग ऐसा बचा है जिस में आम तौर से देश के छोटे, गरीब, मध्यम दर्जे के लोग काम में लगे रहते हैं जिस से उन को रोजी मिलती है, लेकिन दुर्भाग्य यह है कि यह सीमा रेखा न खींची

जाने के कारण कि बड़े उद्योग और मंझले उद्योग किस वस्तु का उत्पादन करेंगे, ये बड़े और मंझले उद्योग, लघु और कुटीर उद्योंगों को खाते चले जा रहे हैं । इस कारण ये उद्योग बीमार भी हो रहे हैं ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, बुनकर और हथकरघा उद्योग हमारे देश का कपड़े का प्राचीनतम उद्योग रहा है । अभी माननीय रेड्डी साहब ने बुनकरों को बचाने के संबंध में विशेष रूप से तीन बातें कही हैं - उन्हें अनुदान प्राप्त सूत मिलना चाहिए, वित्तीय एजेंसिया उन्हें ब्याज-रहित कर्ज दें या कम ब्याज पर कर्ज दें और तीसरे सरकार इन बुनकरों द्वारा तैयार किए गए कपड़े को खरीदे । लेकिन महोदय, ये तीनों बातें आज समाप्त हो गयी हैं । बैंक्स तो कॉमर्सियल हो गए हैं, लिहाजा वे बगैर ब्याज के कर्ज क्यों देंगे ? इसलिए उन की यह बात मुझे व्यावहारिक नहीं लगती । फिर वित्तीय एजेंसियों को भी पैसा चाहिए, लेकिन वह भी कॉमर्सियल हो गयी हैं । अब सरकारी उपक्रम एन.टी.सी. भी घाटे में है और उस के मिल बंद होते चले जा रहे हैं । अब सब से बड़ी बात यह है कि बुनकर और हथकरघा वाले खादी का कपड़ा बनाते थे और उस के बने खादी के कपड़े कांग्रेसी लोग पहनते थे, लेकिन उन्होंने खादी के कपड़े पहनना बंद कर दिया है । ...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्री खान गुफरान जाहिदी (उत्तर प्रदेश) : देखिए, यह प्योर खादी है ।

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम : ये भी प्योर खादी है । तो महोदय, इन लोगों ने खादी के कपड़े पहनना बंद कर दिया और जब कोई उस कपड़े को पहनेगा नहीं, सरकारी उद्योग बंद हो रहे हैं, सरकार के पास पैसा नहीं है, सरकार के पास खरीदी केन्द्र नहीं हैं, बैंक पैसा नहीं देंगे, खादी कोई खरीदेगा नहीं तो इन का क्या होगा ? उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं यहां एक बात कहना चाहता हूं । यह है तो दूसरे संदर्भ में, लेकिन मैं खासकर कांग्रेस के लोगों और कम्युनिस्टों का ध्यान चाहूंगा । महोदय, बल्लभभाई पटेल जब ऑल इंडिया कांग्रेस कमेटी के प्रेसीडेंट थे तो 1931 में कराची अधिवेशन में उन्होंने अपने अध्यक्षीय भाषण में कहा था -

> "Whatever we produce in our country, we must encourage to the exclusion of foreign." I will continue.

महोदय, मुझे संसदीय समितियों में दौरे पर जाने का अवसर प्राप्त हुआ है । हमारी संसदीय समितियों के सदस्य बड़े शहरों में जाकर थोड़ी-बहुत देर के लिए घूमने जाते हैं । वे वहां कहां जाते हैं ? वे वहां जाते हैं जहां विदेशी माल कन्फिस्केट होकर बंदरगाहों में बिकता है वहां से विदेशी कपड़ा खरीदकर लाते हैं । सांसद भी लाते हैं । मैं ने खरीदते हुए देखा है । और यह कांग्रेस के लोग भी लाते हैं । मेरे सामने लाए हैं । अब यह उनका, बल्लभभाई पटेल का कहना है और हम सब उसकी दुहाई देते हैं । I quote : "Whatever we produce in our country,

we must encourage. We must exclude all foreign goods. This is a condition of national growth. Thus, we must encourage and carry on intensive propaganda on behalf of the indigenous industries; insurance companies, banking, shipping and things like that. We may not belittle or neglect them on the ground of their inferiority or dearness." He further said, "The State should own or control key industries, services and other means of public interest." This is what Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel has said in his Presidential speech in 1931, at Karachi. What his followers are doing is contrary to the commitment of their leader.

तो फिर रेड्डी साहब यह बातें व्यावहारिक मुझे दिखाई नहीं दे रही हैं, लेकिन वही बात है इच्छा-शक्ति की । हम भिन्न भिन्न राजनैतिक दलों के लोग अगर इच्छा-शक्ति पैदा करें तो दो बातें हम न भूलें कि अगर हमारे देश का बुनियादी उद्योग समाप्त हो गया या कुटीर उद्योग समाप्त हो गया तो हमारे देश में करोड़ों लोग बेरोजगार हो जाएंगे । इससे सेल्फ एंपलायमेंट, स्वतः रोजगार मिलता है । हमारे यहां सेलरीड एम्पलाइज के लिए गुंजाइश नहीं है । फ्रेश रिक्रूटमेंट तो है नहीं, पुरानों की भी छंटनी हो रही है, सरकारें दस परसेंट, पच्चीस परसेंट सेलरीड एम्पलाइज की कटौती करने जा रही हैं । अब सेलरीड एंपलायमेंट मिलेगा नहीं, वेज्ड एंपलायमेंट जो कारखानों से मिलता था वह भी अगर कंप्युटर से चलेंगे तो वेज्ड एंपलायमेंट भी नहीं मिलेगा । If there is a scope for employment, it is available only in cottage industries and small-scale industries which is called self-employment.

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, इसलिए जरूरी है कि हम इन्हें बचाएं, भले ही हमें इसके लिए अनुदान देना पड़े या बैंकों से पैसा देना पड़े या इनके लिए हमें खरीद केन्द्र बनाना पड़े। लेकिन, पहले हम उपभोक्ता बनें क्योंकि अगर उपभोक्ता नहीं बनेंगे तो उनका कपड़ा कौन खरीदेगा? गांव का आदमी अब उसे पहनता नहीं, तो कौन खरीदेगा । इसलिए खादी, हेंडलूम और कुटीर उद्योग का, बुनकरों का बना कपड़ा है, इसे हम पहनना शुरू करें । कम से कम जन-प्रतिनिधि तो इसे पहनें, राजनीतिज्ञ तो इसे पहनें वरना यहां खोखली बातें करने से कोई फायदा नहीं होगा । आज राजनीतिज्ञों का सम्मान वैसे ही बहुत घट गया है और इस तरह की यहां केवल बातें करके उसे घटाना नहीं है कि भविष्य में लोग हमें गालियां दें या बुरा कहें, कोई सम्मान न करे । इसलिए मैं इस बात को यहां प्रार्थना के साथ सरकार से कहना चाहूंगा, यह सरकार काम करने वाली है ।...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री दीपांकर मुखर्जी (पश्चिमी बंगाल): क्या कहा आपने

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम : जी, काम करने वाली सरकार है । काम करती है, आप मानें या

न मानें । अच्छे या गलत, लेकिन काम करने वाली सरकार है, टलाऊ सरकार नहीं है । तो मैं आपके माध्यम से प्रार्थना करूंगा, उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, सरकार के प्रतिनिधियों से, कि मील के पत्थर जैसा कोई काम करें, लघु उद्योग को बचाने की दिशा में कोई आप कदम उठाएं और इस संबंध में यहां आप आश्वासन भी दें ।

उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं माननीय श्री रेड्डी साहब जी, जो यहां पर उपस्थित नहीं हैं उनकी गैरहाजिरी में, उनके विधेयक का समर्थन कर रहा हूँ । धन्यवाद ।

श्री दीपांकर मुखर्जी : वह पीछे बैठे हैं ।

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम : मेरे सामने नहीं बैठे ।

SHRI JIBON ROY : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Bill moved by Mr. Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy. I will make a brief speech. Mr. Reddy, has moved a very important Bill. I support it. But the kind of liberalisation that we are pursuing is unfair to the handlooms. They cannot go side by side. Both Mr.Reddy and Mr. Gautam should understand that. It is like a golden pot made of stone. Now, you have raised the maximum investment limit of the small-scale industries to Rs.5 crores. All the mill-owners, textile magnates...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM : You can give your name.

SHRI JIBON ROY : Now, the thing is, all the textile magnates closed their handlooms and entered the powerloom sector. It comes within Rs.5 crores! Can the handlooms compete with the powerlooms? Every day, the design, working and quality in powerlooms are improving. After some time, you will find that the powerloom 'sari' and cloth are better than those coming from the handloom. Therefore, you will reform and you will talk of increasing the investment limit in the small scale industry and also you will talk of the welfare of the handlooms, welfare of the handicraft. Handloom and handicraft and powerlooms are in the small scale industry. And powerloom magnates, textile magnates, are cornering all the relief that are coming to the small scale sector, specially to the textile industry. You go and enquire; or ask your Minister to enquire. What percentage of the new Rs.25,000 crore investment in the textile industry will go to the big powerlooms and how much will come to the handlooms? Therefore,

wisdom is required. Whenever your Finance Minister takes the chair and speaks, he addresses us, the Left, as 'block-headed'. We have no head and we know nothing! During the last 50 years, equity and growth were going side by side. Now we have to forget about equity. Since no equity is there, you cannot make any welfare in the handloom industry or the handicraft industry. That is the main thing. Wisdom is required; vision is required; love for the people is required; love for the poor people is required. I understand, I know, the handloom industry. They are living the life of destitutes. They prepare the things but they cannot sell them. Even if they sell, they have to make distress sale. The Government is not there to procure their products. There is no show-room. There is no exhibition. Therefore, our handloom is dying. Once, when the British came to India during 1756-57, they had killed the Muslin of Dhaka. Again, a re-killing of our handloom industry is taking place in the name of liberalisation, in the name of patent regime

Therefore, I have a request to make to the mover of the Bill from an important Party which supports this Government. Let them support the Government. I never mind. But let them create pressure on the Government so that the policy of equity is taken in the social direction. Unless that is done, nothing is going to take place for the welfare of the poor people.

With these words, while I support the Bill, I request the Government to see that much more money flows to the handloom workers, to the handloom sector, to the handicraft sector. The Government should buy their products, open show-rooms and organise a number of exhibitions throughout the country and outside, in foreign countries. Our handicraft and handlooms are having a market. They have to expand the market. A multi-faceted direction has to be taken. Thank you very much.

MISS MABEL REBELLO (Madhya Pradesh): I thank you, Mr.Vice-Chairman. Mr. Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy has indeed raised a vital issue. In India, we have lakhs of handloom weavers. Not only in Andhra. I come from Madhya Pradesh. We have also plenty of Handloom weavers in different districts. I know personally that all of them are suffering. In fact, they are skilled workers. In spite of their being skilled workers, they are reduced to the state of wage-earners, unskilled workers.

They are paid hardly Rs.30/-, Rs.40/- or Rs.50/-. And if you see, the conditions in which they are, are miserable. They do not have light; they work in dingy little places; the looms belong to somebody else; they take the yarn from somebody else; and they weave for somebody else. Sir, I think the Development Commissioner, Handlooms, of the Government of India, might have spent crores and crores of rupees in this sector. But in spite of that, the Handloom weavers today do not even own these looms. They are working for others as wage-earners. What do they earn? They hardly earn Rs. forty or Rs. fifty. I have seen them with my own eyes. When you see them, it appears as if beggars are begging. It is like that. If an able bodied person does some little work, he will get Rs. 100/- or Rs. 150/- whereas the artisan, who is a skilled artisan, who can weave intricate designs, gets a very negligible amount. Yesterday only, somebody was telling me that in Ujjain, there are people who even today are weaving sarees and one saree is worth a lakh of rupees. They make such beautiful designs and produce such precious commodities. But what does that weaver get? His art, his skill is not valued at all. In fact, he is a man who makes our country proud. It is true that with liberalisation, the multinationals are coming and joining the high skilled areas. But they can never acquire the skill that these weavers have and they can never in their lifetime produce such beautiful and intricate designs which these weavers produce and we are really proud of them. It is our heritage and we should be proud of our heritage. We should retain it and we should help these weavers to maintain it. But what is happening today? The weavers are not getting yarn on time. If they get the yarn on time, they have to pay an exorbitant price, they have to pay interest at an exorbitant rate, and sometimes, they have to pay the compound interest because sometimes, they take money from the private people. Banks are not willing to give them loan at an affordable price. And after they weave, again, there is a middleman who buys their product. What does the weaver get? He gets nothing. He hardly gets his daily wages. All these big officers headed by a senior I.A.S. officer like DCH that we have, what do they do? I am informed that there were a lot of weaver training centres trying to help the weavers to upgrade their skills, to upgrade their designs so that they can really go and sell their product. The DCH is a senior I.A.S. officer. But what is happening? The weavers are not able to sell their product at a remunerative price. He does

not get any value for his product. Who gets the proper value of his product? It is the middleman who gets the money. Then again, there was a State Corporation to market these products. How does the State Corporation deal with the weavers? When the weavers come to take orders, they get harassment, and when they come to give delivery, they will reject their goods on some pretext or the other. When they come for payment, they have to come to the State Headquarters and it takes months before they get their payment. I have got personal experience. I happen to be heading one of the corporations. What orders do they give? They give orders worth Rs. 5,000/- or Rs. 10,000/- and for that purpose, the weavers have to come from a distant place. So, what does that weaver get? He gets nothing. I personally feel that in few years' time, the weaver community will disappear from the face of this mother India because they will either commit suicide, or as my colleague, Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy has said, their children will never take to this profession because there is no money in this profession. So, there is no forward or backward linkages. The condition of the weavers is a pitiable one. I would request the Ministry of Textiles and the Development Commissioner.... *(Interruptions)*

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Madam Rebello, I would request you not to refer to the officers. You kindly withdraw those words.

MISS MABEL REBELLO: All right. I also share the sentiments expressed by Shri Jibon Roy that the weavers are in a very bad shape and I endorse his views. The hon. Member Shri Solipeta Ramachandra Reddy has said that the weavers should be given some relief. First of all, they should be given some subsidy to buy their own looms because most of them do not own looms. There is a lot of competition today because the powerlooms with mechanical composite mills are there in this sector and the weavers can hardly stay in the market. So, he needs assistance and he should be given timely assistance to make his product. And he should be given some sort of mechanism. We must work to see that weavers are given proper rates for their products. Once again I would say that weavers are making our country proud and we must look after them. We must see that their skills are maintained, their skills are upgraded, timely training is given to them to modernise their skills and their designs so that they do not

bring out outdated designs which are not marketable. They must bring out marketable products. We must assist them. With these few words, I thank you, Sir.

PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I support this Bill. This Bill enumerates the welfare measures to be adopted by the Government to safeguard the interests of Handloom weavers. The Handloom industry has a vital role to play in the Indian economy. In the history of civilisation of humanity, only clothes differentiate humanity from the other living animals. Hence, it is one of the oldest professions of humanity. The people who resorted to this vocation are not well off, they live in poverty and the income which they are able to get is very meagre and insufficient to lead a respectable life in the society. This is the condition prevailing in every part of the country, whether it is Andhra Pradesh or Tamil Nadu or Bihar or Madhya Pradesh or anywhere else. So, the conditions of the weavers are the same everywhere. They live in poverty, they are below the poverty line. The majority of the people in this industry other than those engaged in agriculture, form our society. The weaving community is substantially big, next to agricultural community. In the interests of our country, and to augment the economic condition of our country, we have to think of protecting this industry, the people who are involved in this profession. Sir, a number of welfare measures have to be thought of and have to be implemented. The Bill enunciates these measures. A small discussion or a big discussion, stretching over two or three days here, is not sufficient. I request the Minister concerned to constitute an Expert Committee at the national level to go into the matter everywhere, and the matter should be assessed State-wise. The condition of the weavers started deteriorating when the Britishers came to our country, sometime in 1815 or so. After that, they entered our country as traders. Later on, they became the rulers. The two big powers had destroyed our small weavers' community. They had destroyed the industry and they had converted India into a safe market for their textile industry. The industrial revolution took place in the eighteenth century in England and other places, ruining their villages. Actually, they deserted the villages. One great poet has described it in a caption "deserted village". So many villages were deserted. All the small weavers, farmers of that country, rushed to the new industrial cities and they lived their only as

labourers or beggars. That was the social condition in Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. It is only after industrialisation took place that they were able to establish themselves. Now, we are losing these people, and we have left them under the poverty line for ever. The condition was such that, our great Anna, when he was in the Opposition, actually took the clothes of the weavers on his head; and on his shoulders to sell in the market only to propagate the importance of selling these clothes and to safeguard their interests. After Anna, Dr. Kalaignar, when he assumed charge as Chief Minister, had initciated many welfare measures. I am not talking about them now. I request the Government to constitute an Expert Committee. In order to improve the lives of these people, that Committee should go from State to State to look into the measures which different States are adopting. The cooperative sector has to play a very vital role. As one hon. Member has pointed out, exhibitions should be organised to help these people. I request the Government to have an Expert Committee, to look into all these matters. They should also bring forward a comprehensive bill in this regard. This Government should come forward to appoint an Expert Committee in response to this discussion to go into these matters. At that stage, we will ennumerate as to what should be done in this regard. With these few words, I support the Bill.

SHRI JAYANT KUMAR MALHOUTRA (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, this Bill which has been moved by my friend, Mr. Reddy, is very important and I support it. But, while supporting I would like to stress that one of our biggest problems ennunciated in this is that of employment opportunities. Today's modern industry, whether chemical industry, textile industry, or, even engineering industry, requires at least three to four crores of investment to find employment for one person. But look at this massive industry that we have, where skills have been inherited for generations and it can provide, in each State, employment for millions of people. What is it that lacking? I think what we require is a major task force. I remember, in the 60's, hundreds and thousands of handloom weavers in the district of Etawah were employed to export bedcovers to USA. But that whole trade has died because the quality could not be maintained. Now these things could not match with the expectations in those countries and the whole industry died . Therefore, the task force must study the talents available among the people of our country, and how it could be matched with the market requirements of India and abroad. Wherever research units have to

be put up to improve the quality, finance etc. should be provided by the Government because this is the cheapest investment that the Government can make to provide mass employment in the country, which I think, and everyone in this House will agree is the basic need and the basic shortcoming that we have in this country today. Our textile exports are next to nothing compared to China. Handloom suffers from no quantity restrictions from the western world. Therefore, I would urge upon the hon. Minister, - unfortunately, he is not present, ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): The Minister is present.

SHRI JAYANT KUMAR MALHOUTRA : He should establish a task force to look into this. Not a Committee, or, anything, but a task force charged with reviving this dying industry, making it possible for weavers to make a livelihood, and produce products for which there is a growing market in India.

There is an enormous market potential all over the world. The handloom products command a premium. Unfortunately, we sell them at a discount. Therefore, these aspects must be studied and our talented youngsters must be put to the task of producing quality weaves and making it a success in different States. This is my suggestion. With these few words, I support the Bill.

SHRI KHAGEN DAS (Tripura): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I support this Bill moved by Mr. S.R. Reddy. The handloom sector has been playing a vital role for a long time. A lot of people, both male and female, are engaged in this sector. It has got a lot of employment potential. But this sector has been facing serious problems and some remedial measures should be taken by the Government. The people engaged in this sector are very poor and unable to purchase even the raw materials. The banks are not coming forward to give them loans, according to their demand. Sometimes, they are forced to take loans from the money-lenders, at an exorbitant rate of interest. They must be saved from the clutches of the money-lenders. So, they must be given interest-free loans. This is the first point. Secondly, the people who are engaged in this sector--everybody knows this--have to make distress sale. The middlemen are taking advantage of this. We are also facing similar problems in our State. So, the

Government should come forward to purchase the products from the individual handloom weavers as well as co-operatives. Thirdly, these Handloom weavers are facing competition from the powerloom sector. Who will save them? The Government must come forward. So, my suggestion is that, for purchasing the handloom products, they have to be given subsidy. I have already mentioned that many people are engaged in this sector. But, now, they are forced to leave this area only to become daily wage earners. The Government knows that unemployment is rising by leaps and bounds every day. The people who are engaged in this sector are becoming unemployed. Some urgent measures must be taken by the Government to save this industry. With these few words, I support this Bill.

SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM : Thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on this Bill. I welcome this Bill. First of all, this is an important Bill, as far as the labourers of this country are concerned. As far as handloom, powerloom and handicrafts are concerned, the labourers are suffering. I have got three points. Firstly, the Government has launched a Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) for the textile and the jute industries. This scheme is in operation w.e.f. 1.4.1999 for a period of five years i.e. upto 2004. The Central Government has been providing support to these sectors through various schemes. For the powerloom sector, the schemes are: Powerloom Service Centre, Computer Aided Design Centre, Group Insurance Scheme, etc. For the handloom workers, the schemes are: Project Package Scheme, Handloom Development Centre, Quality Dyeing Scheme, Health Package Scheme, and Market Development Assistance Scheme. For handicraft, there are 4 or 5 schemes, training schemes, Design and Development Scheme, Marketing and Market Development Support, Craft Development Centre, Workshop-cum-Housing Scheme. Probably for the powerloom, there are three schemes, for the handloom five schemes; and for handicraft five schemes. All these schemes are being implemented in these sectors. The question is one of proper implementation of these schemes. I would request the Hon. Minister to take necessary steps with regard to implementation of these schemes.

I thank my hon. learned friend who has moved this Bill. This Bill is not only for Andhra Pradesh or Tamil Nadu, but it is for the entire country. Sir, handloom workers are committing suicide, because their earning capacity is very low, their wages are very low. If they apply for loan and other things, they do not get even a single naya paisa from the cooperative societies. Certain cooperative societies have been working in my State. But after the election of these societies, they are not functioning properly. Only the persons who become members of the Co-operative Societies are able to get loans. They also become Directors. But the other people, Handloom weavers do not get any loans. I request the hon. Minister who is from my State. He recently met the representatives of some mills which are in a worst condition. Now they are going to revamp these mills. I would request the Hon. Minister to take necessary steps for the proper implementation of these schemes, since these schemes are meant for the powerloom workers, handloom workers, and handicraft workers. The TUF Scheme is not being implemented all over the country. This scheme started only w.e.f. 1.4.99. Now they are not taking any steps, so far as this scheme is concerned. I would like to know whether the Government has provided any fund for this Scheme. This fund would prove very useful for the powerloom, handloom, and handicraft workers. I would request the Hon. Minister to allot some fund for this scheme so that it could be implemented in the textile sector - both powerloom and handloom.

श्री खान गुफरान जाहिदी: वाइस चेयरमैन साहब, मैं आपका बड़ा शुक्रगुजार हूं जो आपने मुझे बोलने का मौका दिया । मैं, रामचन्द्रा रेड्डी जी ने जो बिल पेश किया है उसके सपोर्ट में खड़ा हुआ हूं । महोदय, सच बात तो यह है कि अगर हमारे देश में गरीबी की रेखा से नीचे 32 करोड़ लोग रहते हैं तो इनमें से 20 करोड़ लोग वही होंगे जो इन छोटी छोटी इंडस्ट्रीज में काम करते हैं और इनमें सबसे ज्यादा बुनकर आते हैं । आज उनके लिए एक वक्त के खाने के लिए भी समस्या आ गई । ऐसा नहीं है कि सरकारों ने काम नहीं किया । काम किया लेकिन आज की स्थिति अगर हम देखते हैं तो यही महसूस होता है कि हैंडलूम कारपोरेशन हर स्टेट में बनाए गए हैं ताकि हर रीजन में उनको सूत दिया जा सके । उनके लिए परचेजिंग सेंटर बनाए गए हैं लेकिन आज की जो दुर्दशा है, वाइस-चेयर मैन साहब, वह इतनी खराब है , मैं अपने स्टेट, उत्तर प्रदेश के बारे में कह सकता हूं कि वहां पर 90 फीसदी से ज्यादा सूत मिलें-हमारे यहां से श्री राजनाथ सिंह जी यहां मंत्री हो गए हैं वह इसे बहुत अच्छी तरह से जानते हैं, कि 90 फीसदी से ज्यादा जो सरकारी सूची में थे वे प्राइवेट को दे दिए या बेच दिए गए या बंद हो गए हैं। जो हैंडलूम

कारपोरेशन के मुलाजिम हैं उनको तनख्वाहें नहीं मिल रही हैं, उनके परचेजिंग सेंटर बंद हो गए हैं। सूत की जब यह हालत हो तो इसमें काम करने वालों की क्या हालत होगी? इस काम में बुनकर की पूरी फेमिली लगती है । यह उनको विरासत में मिला हुआ है। वे सूत को रंगते हैं, उसको सही करते हैं, उसके बाद वह बुना जाता है और बुनने के बाद उसका डिजाइन बनाते हैं । ये लोग पढ़े-लिखे न होने के बावजूद डिजाइन बनाते हैं और मुकाबला करते हैं । आज हैंडलूम की जो खपत है माननीय सदस्य ने कहा कि यह बाहर के मुल्कों में है । ईस्ट इंडिया कंपनी जब यहां आई थी तो उन्होंने हैंडलूम में काम करने वालों की, कारीगरों की उंगलियां काट दी थी । लेकिन उनका यह फन मरा नहीं, यह हुनर खत्म नहीं हुआ हर स्टेट में है । कोई स्टेट ऐसा नहीं है जहां ये न हों । इसमें एक कम्युनिटी के लोग नहीं हैं बल्कि हर कम्युनिटी के लोग इसमें लगे हुए हैं और काम कर रहे हैं । सबसे ज्यादा परेशानी उनकी यह है कि उनको धागा वक्त पर नहीं मिलता है । हमारे यहां एक्सपोर्ट प्रमोशन कौंसिल बनी हुई है । एक्सपोर्ट प्रमोशन कौंसिल हमारे हैंडलूम और हमारे पावरलूम के प्रोडक्शन को उस तरह से नहीं बेचता जिस तरह से बेचना चाहिए वरना आज भी इसके लिए इतना बड़ा मार्केट मौजूद है । आज कल ग्लोबलाइजेशन की बात की जा रही है लेकिन फैक्ट यह है कि हमारा टैक्सटाइल फल-फूल नहीं रहा है । डब्लू.टी.ओ. में जो कुछ हो रहा है वह यह है कि हमारे मार्केट को कैसे बैन किया जाए उसको कैसे बंद किया जाए । हमारा अगर मार्केटिंग ठीक होता, सही होता तो हमारे माल की अच्छी डिमांड होती और हम अपना माल अच्छा बेचते । लेकिन ऐसा न करके हमारे छोटे बुनकरों को खत्म किया जा रहा है ।

मान्यवर, मैं एक दो बातों को कहकर अपनी बात खत्म करना चाहता हूं क्योंकि समय नहीं है। मैं इसको होल हार्टेडिली सपोर्ट करता हूं । फाइनेंसियल कारपोरेशन हर स्टेट में आज भी चल रहे हैं। इन फाइनेंसियल कारपोरेशन को आप कहें, मजबूर करें कि वह कम से कम 10-15 परसेंट पैसा हैंडलूम के लिए ही नहीं बल्कि हैंडलूम और पावरलूम सेक्टर को भी मजबूती से एयर मार्क कर दें । चाहे यू0पी0एफ0सी0 हो, चाहे मध्य प्रदेश फाइनेंसियल कारपोरेशन हो इनको रिजर्व बैंक की तरफ से इंस्ट्रक्शन दिए जाएं कि और इंडस्ट्रीज के साथ हैंडलूम को भी इसमें शामिल किया जाए और जैसे और इंडस्ट्री के लिए पैसा एयरमार्क किया जाता है वैसे ही इसके लिए भी किया जाए जिससे कि यह इंडस्ट्री मर न जाए ।

साथ ही एक्सपोर्ट प्रमोशन कौंसिल में स्पेशली हैंडलूम के लिए अलग से एक युनिट कायम की जाए । हैंडलूम में एक्जीबिशन- हम अपने मुल्क में डिस्ट्रिक्ट लेवल पर, राज्य और सेंटर पर करते हैं लेकिन दूसरे मुल्कों में भी इसकी एक्जीबिशन की जानी चाहिए । हमारे यहां 25 स्टेट्स हैं और पांच यूनियन टैरिटरीज हैं सब के अपने कारपोरेशन हैं और सब ने अपने इम्पोरियम कायम किए हुए हैं । उसमें कितनी सेल होती है, 20 परसेंट, 30 परसेंट, 40 परसेंट, 50 परसेंट

वहां पर सेल में माल बिकता है । इतनी सेल हो रही है कि न तो उनका माल मार्केट में आ रहा है और न वह परचेजिंग सेंटर से जा रहा है। वक्त से धागा दिया जा रहा है । आज कंपीटीशन का वक्त है । ज़मीन पर चल रहे हैं तो वक्त चाहिये। हवाई जहाज़ से भाग रहे हैं पता नहीं क्यों । वक्त पर माल का तैयार न होना, वक्त पर न बिकना, लैग बिहाइंड कर रहा है टाइम का, यह प्रोब्लम किये हुए है । इसलिए मजदूरों को हैसियत से पूरी मजदूरी नहीं मिल रही है । मान्यवर, मैं आपसे कहूंगा कि अब वक्त आ गया है चारों तरफ से उनको धागा क्यों नहीं मिल रहा है, कॉटन ज्यादा कीमत पर क्यों मिल रहा है, उनको धागा मिलने के बाद माल तैयार हो कर क्यों नहीं जा रहा है । जो तमाम कारपोरेशंस बनी हैं वह इन डिस्ट्रेस हैं, बरबाद हो रहे है, बंद हो रहे हैं, तनख्वाहें क्यों नहीं मिल रही हैं । इस तरफ पूरी तरह से जांच करने के बाद एक ज़बरदस्त कमेटी बननी चाहिये वरना 32 करोड़, 40 करोड़ लोगों का यह मामला है, यह बड़ी तबाही की तरफ ले जाएगा, हम लोग किसी भी तरफ के नहीं रह जाएंगे। मैं एक शेर पढ़ कर अपनी बात खत्म करता हूं -

दुनियां में फिकर-ए-नान अदब में अज़ाब है
हर तरह से गरीब की मिट्टी खराब है ।

हम क्या संकल्प नहीं ले सकते ? अभी हमारे गौतम जी बड़ा सबक पढ़ा रहे थे, हमें तो इनके मुंह से सबक बड़ा अच्छा लगता है । क्या हम संकल्प नहीं ले सकते कि हम लोगों को ज्यादा से ज्यादा हैंडलूम का इस्तेमाल करना चाहिये । मैं करता हूं इसलिए मैं यह बात आपसे कह रहा हूं । इस बात को छोड़ना नहीं चाहिये । अगर हम लोग शुरुआत कर देंगे तो बाकी लोगों का दिल बढ़ेगा, कोशिशें होंगी, लोग आगे बढ़ेंगे, हमारे हैंडलूम, पावरलूम का मुकाबला कर सकते हैं दूसरे दुनियां के मुल्कों से। इसलिए इस बिल को पूरा सपोर्ट करते हुए फाइनेंशियल इंस्टीट्यूशंस पर पाबंदी लगाने की बात करता हूं कि वो दस परसेंट से ले कर पंद्रह परसेंट तक अपने तमाम लोंस को हैंडलूम की तरफ डाइवर्ट करें । अगर यह कर देंगे तो उनका काम बन जाएगा । शुक्रिया ।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Hon. Members, the discussion will continue next time.

The House stands adjourned till 11 A.M., on Monday, the 6th December, 1999.

The House then adjourned at two minutes past five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Monday, the 6th December, 1999.